

# HEART OF A CHAMPION

## Finishing Strong

2 Timothy 4: 6-8

Week 4 of 4

The coaching staff of a high school cross-country running team got together for dinner after winning its second state championship in two years. The program had been transformed in the previous five years from good (top 20 in the state) to great (consistent contenders for the state championship on both the boys' and girls' teams).

"I don't get it," said one of the coaches. "Why are we so successful? We don't work any harder than other teams. And what we do is just so simple. Why does it work?"

He was referring to their simple strategy: We run best at the end. We run best at the end of workouts. We run best at the end of races. And we run best at the end of the season, when it counts the most. Everything is geared to this simple idea, and the coaching staff knows how to create this effect better than any other team in the state.

For example, they place a coach at the 2-mile mark (of a 3.1-mile race) to collect data as the runners go past. Then the coaches calculate not how fast the runners go, but how many competitors they pass at the end of the race, from mile two to the finish....

The kids learn how to pace themselves and race with confidence: "We run best at the end," they think at the end of a hard race. "So, if I'm hurting bad, then my competitors must hurt a whole lot worse!" [*Jim Collins, Good To Great (Harper Business, 2001), p. 206*]

The daily reading for this week will be examples of people who walked with the Lord at the end of their lives. Be encouraged and determined to finish strong.

- DAY ONE – Genesis 49:50-14
- DAY TWO – Genesis 50:15-26
- DAY THREE – Judges 16:23-31
- DAY FOUR – Deuteronomy 32:48-34:12
- DAY FIVE – Matthew 14:1-12

**Memory Verse:** "Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:8)



northeast daily reading

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